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zur vergl. Geschichte der rom. Poesie und Prosa des Mittelalters, should have been forced to use the later and more corrupt forms of the North-English version. The relation of these to that of the unexpanded collection as found, for example, in MS. Ash. 42, fol. 164 (b) should, however, be emphasized.

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# NEUF MOIS SUR VINGT ANS: A DATE IN THE CAREER OF J. A. DE BAÏF.

In a sonnet addressed to Muret, J. A. de Baïf states that he wrote the *Amours de Méline*

sur les rives de Seine,  
Lorsque neuf mois ie contoy sur vingt ans.<sup>1</sup>

This expression "*neuf mois sur vingt ans*" has led both his editors into a curious error.

M. Becq de Fouquières writes in the introduction to his *Poésies choisies de J. A. de Baïf* (Paris, 1874), p. xiii:

"Du doux nom de Méline il décora l'amante imaginaire qui lui inspira d'amoureux sonnets et de lascives chansons; et il prit soin de dater exactement cette première heure d'éclosion poétique: (He quotes here the lines given above).

C'est ainsi, dans le courant de l'automne de l'année 1552, qu'il laissait un peu négligement tomber ses premiers vers de sa plume facile."

The same introduction states that Baïf was born in 1532. It is evident that M. Becq de Fouquières interprets "*neuf mois sur vingt ans*" "twenty years and nine months."

M. Marty-Laveaux<sup>2</sup> falls into the same error. He states directly that Baïf wrote the *Amours de Méline* at the age of twenty years and nine months:

"revenant un peu plus loin, dans un sonnet à Muret, à son exactitude ordinaire, il nous apprend qu'il avait vingt ans et neuf mois:

Lorsque neuf mois ie contoy sur vingt ans."

Baïf was born the nineteenth of February, 1532. He was twenty years and nine months old in November, 1552. But the privilege for the first edition is dated December tenth, 1552. M. Becq

de Fouquières realizes that this is indeed rushing into print.<sup>3</sup> He says:

"Pressé de jouir de la gloire poétique et de ceindre son front d'un *chapeau de laurier*, il ne se donna guère le temps de revoir et de polir ses jeunes chansons, dont quelques-unes, même parmi les plus gracieuses, auraient gagné à quelques suppressions. Les *Amours de Méline* parurent sans retard: l'impression était achevée le 10 décembre, 1552."

But does *neuf mois sur vingt ans* mean "twenty years and nine months," as both editors have so readily assumed? Littré gives *plus de, de plus que* as meanings for *sur*, but he gives no expressions of time among the examples cited. Godefroy, however, apparently settles the matter when under the caption *sour* he says:—"Fig. il indique un *acheminement vers*," and cites the following examples:—

si revenrons au roi Phelipe qui estoit  
sor l'aage de vint ans.<sup>4</sup>

Les chiens  
Sur les deux ans, que l'age les renforce,  
Il pourront bien prendre le cerf à force.<sup>5</sup>

The use of *sur* with the idea of "toward" temporal is not infrequent in modern French; *sur les quatre heures, il était sur son départ, sur la fin du jour*.

The meaning of *neuf mois sur vingt ans* is, then, "nineteen years and nine months." It is only justice to Baïf's reputation to date the sonnets to Méline as early as possible in his career. Moreover, this interpretation removes the difficulty with regard to the date of publication.

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## FRENCH PRONUNCIATION.

*Précis de prononciation française*, L'ABBÉ ROUSSELOT et FAUSTE LACLOTTE. Paris, Welter, 1903.

The appearance of this manual is of great importance, since it is the first application of the principles of experimental phonetics to practical problems of pronunciation. And coming as it

<sup>1</sup> Loc. cit., p. xiv.

<sup>4</sup> Menestrel de Reims, § 22, Wailly.

<sup>5</sup> Passerat, *Oeuvres*, p. 17, éd. 1606.

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Marty-Laveaux, Vol. I, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Baïf, *Oeuvres*, Vol. I, p. ix.